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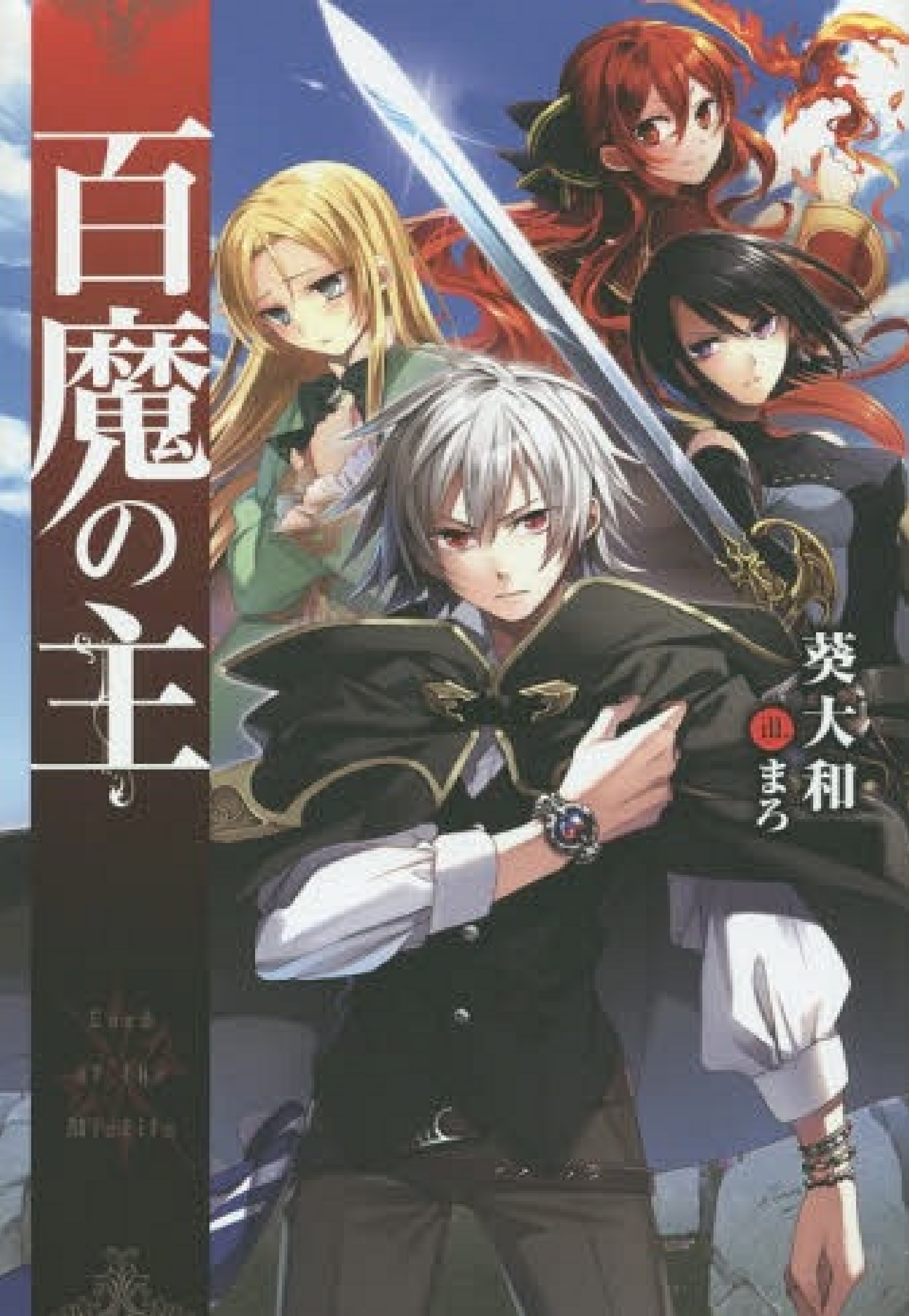

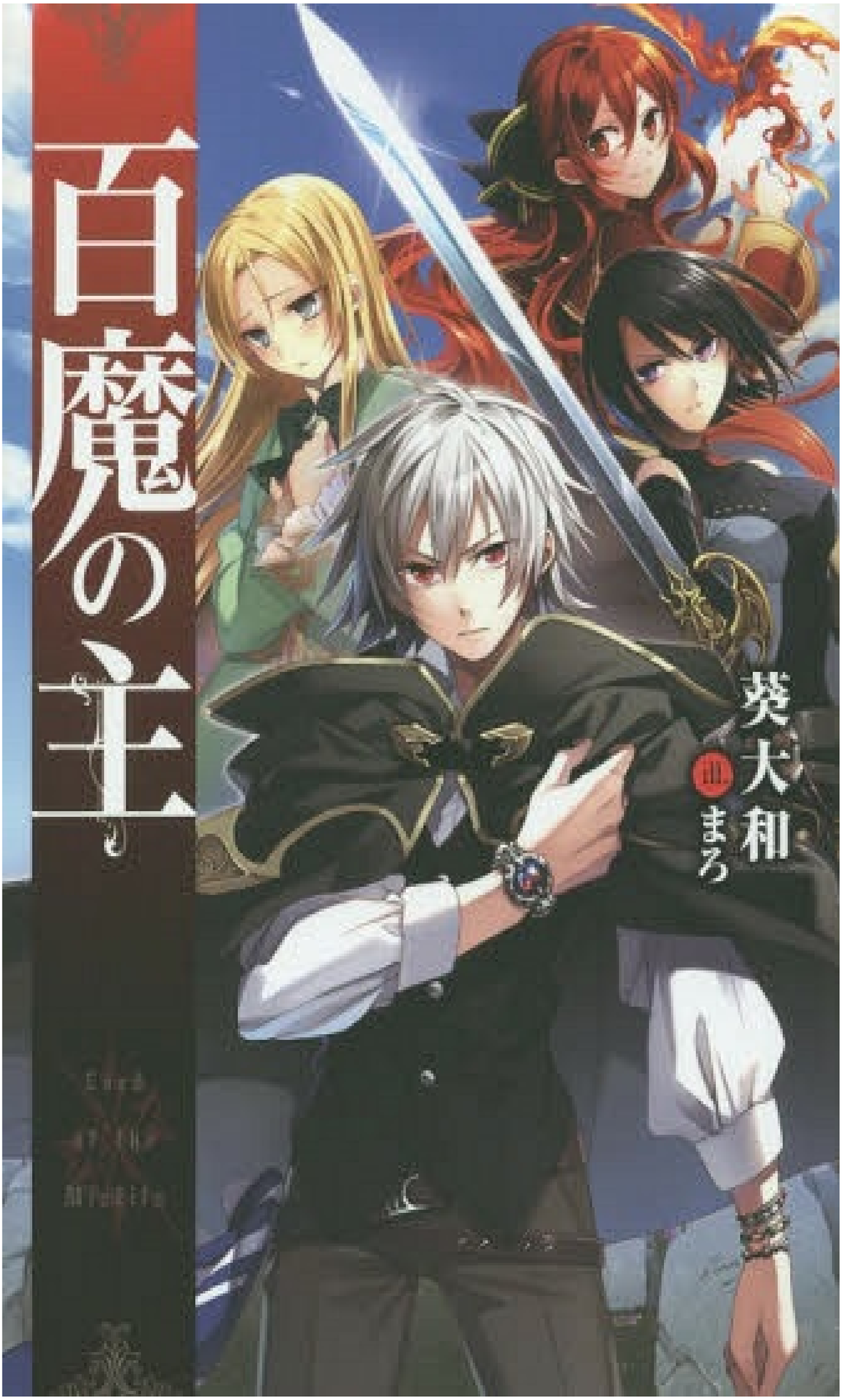
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Hyakuma no Aruji - WN Chapter 01-11

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Chapter 01 : “A very beautiful otherworldly flower.”

Chapter 01: A very beautiful otherworldly flower.

His remaining days are now over.

Swaying it’s body, the one the grim reaper came to meet was on a pure white hospital room and was glancing on the sky as if in a daze.

That day, because his condition improved, he was permitted to head out once more as if it was merely his last consideration.

Glancing on the limp hands he would’ve never imagined was his own before, he once again took a walk on the hospital.

At first there was lingering attachments but once you fully prepared yourself to death everything feels helpless.

As times goes by, you will eventually surrender them.

– I guess that’s life.

I’m also a bit interested as to what is there after death.

That’s why the last stroll that they permitted me wasn’t really that depressing.

So after taking a stroll around the hospital grounds, I decided to go back to my room.

Suddenly, it was around that time.

On my way back, on the corner of the lawn where plants grow, there was tall tree that calmly stood erected.

Below that tree, a purple plant that I have never seen before has suddenly sprouted its head.

— Just what kind of plant was that?

I, who couldn’t even probably move anymore and only had little vitality remaining, thought that it would be good to know a little more about this world. Even in my memories as someone who’ve carefully read animal and plant

reference books in the past, have no recollection of any information regarding that plant.

Though it might simply just that I didn't know about it, because I just can't help but become curious over that plant, I asked the nurse attendant to take it back to my room.

The young nurse said "Which one is it?" and inclined her head, the me who became a bother, scooped it up and placed it in a suitable jar packed with soil.

After that, I spent my quiet days watching over the plant who grew fast in contrast to me who was about to die.

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It's been five days since then.

— The grim reaper stood before the hospital room.

It was a grim reaper with a beautiful face.

『Are you done, yet?』

With a soft smile, the grim reaper asked.
Coming to my side himself, this grim reaper is quite dutiful.

「I'm already fine.」

The grim reaper himself was not someone that would wait and wait forever, but honestly, I have a bit of regret.

If only at the very least, I could see the flower of that plant bloom…..

That frail purple plant that was seemingly about to bloom, has begun to sprout flower buds.

I took the trouble of picking it up, because it was a plant that I grew, even on my last moments, I wanted to see it bloom it's flower.

『Don't worry. That flower will bloom right now. Just a little more, in about 10 seconds. 』

As if being able to see through my mind, the grim reaper said those words with a smile in his face.

Before I noticed, the grim reaper was already walking next to me.
He really had a lovely face, it was a seemingly genderless beautiful appearance.

Coming towards the jar, the grim reaper stretched out his hands.

『When the flower blooms, it would be the start of your departure.』

The grim reaper caressed the flower buds seemingly filled with affection.
Afterwards, glancing towards my direction, the grim reaper emitted a smile in the same manner.

「I see. As long as I could see it's flower, that's fine with me.」

『Well then, let's watch over the plant together and wait.』

Then after that, only silence filled the room.

The needle of the clock quietly declared the time.

In the middle of that, while the body that was heavy have slowly began to feel light, as the dazzling sunlight entered the corner of my eye sight, — finally that time has arrived.

The flower buds began to shake and sway.
Will the flower bloom or will it not? Even my worries have began to sway and fro.

— Go

— Finally, show me your flowers.

And then,

The Flowers–

「–bloomed.」

It was very beautiful, and gave of a faint light— Really….how beautiful–

—

—

–

「」

Chapter 02 : “Come Forth, Child of Heroic Spirits”

Chapter 02 : Come forth, Child of Heroic Spirits.

〈Sacred Mountain of Lindholm〉.

It was the holy mountain that every living thing will meet upon their death.

The destination of those spirits who arrived on the sacred mountain will change depending on the magnitude of their regrets, some will ascend to the heaven, some will have to wait on its foot waiting for “something” to dispel their regrets.
— The festive place of the waiting spirits.
And at the peak of that holy mountain of Lindholm, was a place were particularly strong ones among those spirits riddled with regrets gather.

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「I found an otherworldly flower.」
「Seriously? Things went smoothly huh?」
「The truth is, you just couldn’t admit that you weren’t able to successfully have someone cross over those spirits right?」
「There’s also that but the fact that this otherworldly plant has connected to another one from a separate world is already a miracle in itself already right?」
On that place, countless voice emanated.

On the rough summit filled with stone.
Fierce wind blown and scattered about on the wreckage of snow.

On that space painted with white and gray, spirits with transparent body—
「Though we’re a spirit, having a hundred gather in a place is a suffocating. Distance yourselves a bit from me.」

「Don’t say that. Everyone is interested you know? After all our child will be born.」

–Numbered to a hundred.

In the middle of the spirit that gathered, there was only one existence with a body.

Lying on the ground with his face upwards, his white hair fluttered with the wind.

However, it doesn't move an inch. It was as if it didn't have life in it.

「Though in some way, we can make a body within the substance of our souls, there's no proper contents inside of it. Even worse than a corpse. It's only a doll.」

「The child who will clear away our regrets. This body was made of the sum of our souls. Though there's no mistake that it's brimming with potential, if the one inside is good-for-nothing, I'd be troubled.」

「Greedy will ruin you. — though we're already ruined.」

「I'm not being greedy. Whether it has a talent or not doesn't matter, I won't complain as long as the soul has a strong, noble spirit to not despair from isolation or rough times.」

「That itself is being greedy though. But firstly, will it come or not. We can't entrap a soul in this world after all. The ascending ones are swallowed by the "Heavenly sea of the souls" and those who remain are only broken ones.」

「We are not an exception. Therefore, for us to clear away our regrets, we must call upon a proper otherworldly soul.」

「That's right. Anyhow, as Tyrant said, will it properly cross over? The〈mana〉that the otherworldly grass emitted in its roots have certainly crossed worlds.The roots that crossed the world have indeed successfully connected on the opposite one. When its flower blooms the gate will open.」

「Though everything was left to miracles, everything went well huh? — Really, I never saw an otherworldly plant even during the time I was alive. I thought it was merely a fairy tale.」

「Everyone's like that. Even I, it's my first time, or rather, for an otherworldly grass to cross worlds, I'm sure everyone would be the same.」

Numerous voice emanated.
A voice of a man, a voice of a woman.
For some reason, all of them were seemingly excited.

「It’s about time for the other world’s flower to bloom. As for where it leads to, I will confirm by following the trail of the mana.」

「Be careful. If your soul was trapped in the interval of the worlds, everything will ended up as a failure.」

「Properly guide him okay? The soul of our son.」

「Leave it to me. We made it this far and I wouldn’t make a blunder.」

He was one of the spirits.

The man with a tall and lean figure and had a gender less beautiful face, softly bowed his head.

Immediately after that, the body of that man disappeared as if it flowed with the wind.

The other spirits could only watch the man’s body dissipate with a face filled with belief.
In the midst of them, someone uttered a wish.

「Please come, child of great spirits.」

Those words dissolved into the sky and was carried by the wind.

Chapter 03 : “Merea/Mea”

Chapter 3 : *Merea/Mea*

Upon being guided by the grim reaper, my body soared to the sky.

The reason why I knew that it was in fact my soul that was flying was because I saw my former body bellow.

–It had a warm smile on its face, my body.

Or the body that used to be mine.

『From now on, you will embark on a journey to my world.』

World.

Because it was the grim reaper who said so, was it a spirit world or something like that?.

『The otherworldly plant that we sent bloomed at the end of your life. Surely, it was also the will of the otherworldly plant for your soul to cross worlds.』

『Otherworldly plant?』

『Yes, an otherworldly plant. Connecting different worlds together, it was a peculiar plant.』

Upon the signal of the hand of the grim reaper, we ascended towards the sky.

Though I tilted my head in confusion, other than the gentle smile of the grim reaper, I was given no explanation.

『You will understand upon arriving there. The meaning behind my words. A proper explanation will be made once we crossed to the opposite side, so for now focus on holding my hand. 』

『–Un, I understand.』

With that said to me, I obediently held the grim reaper’s hands tightly.

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Crossing worlds.

Overcoming the boundary of worlds.

I have a feeling that I heard the voice of time.

With that in mind — my consciousness faded.

And after that, as to where we went, or where we headed and where we arrived, I can’t properly remember.

However, the sensation of the strange warmth of the grim reapers’ hand, even though having my consciousness fading, had still remained.

—

—

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◆◆◆

「——」

「——a」

「——rea」

With the vivid sound slowly entering his ears, finally the man regained consciousness.

「Have you woken up, 〈Merea〉?」

The man even with opening his eyes, still had no conviction in him.

Or to be precise he still had no conviction on the place where he was in.

The fact that sounds entered his ears was certain.

Even the sensation of his body was there.

However,

— as for the hands of the grim reaper a while ago….

His memories of being pulled into a hollow space by the grim reaper's hands were faint, it felt as if that hollowed space interfered with his body's cognition.

「It's indeed the spirit of Merea.」

「a….」

Suddenly a lone face entered in his field of vision.

–It was the face of the grim reaper.

At that moment, he finally understood where he was.

「Good morning, Merea.」

「Me…rea?」

「Yes, that is your name. Way before you even crossed worlds, we have decided to name you as such.」

The grim reaper saying "Come take a look" waving his hand and guided his sight, and moving in accordance with it.

He saw a numerous spirits around him.

The substance of their body was thin.

It was transparent.

"This might really be a spirit world" even with that yet to enter his mind, he had already decided in my mind that they are spirits.

「What.. is…」

「It's alright, calm down, Merea. You are alive. You have only crossed worlds. After your soul left your former body from the opposite world, we have called you upon to this world. In you vocabulary, you have reincarnated.」

Reincarnated.

The man whom once wondered what would be after death, at that moment finally understood.

The second body that he was transferred into, for the first time has regained consciousness.

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The man — Merea, who was being watched over by the spirits for the time being, was in a daze and had his consciousness drifting.

After that, he finally gained awareness of his new body.

In comparison to his new body, his former one seemed bigger.

And thinking about it, it felt like it was like the size of a boy.

But even for a boy, it was small.

Or rather, in comparable to those age that could be called a “boy”, it felt much younger.

He stood up.

With his line of sight being higher, his field of vision was still lower than the surrounding spirits.

「This body is –」

「That body was modeled upon the fragments of our soul. Well a body of a baby wouldn’t be able to stand the harsh environment of the holy mountain after all. Though with that said, a body of a five year old isn’t any different so do not push yourself.」

「Aren’t you a grim reaper?」

「Me?」

Suddenly, Merea glanced upon the face of the grim reaper who brought him to this place.

A genderless beautiful face, with a demeanor that had a gentle atmosphere.

However, even his body was transparent.

He was more like a spirit.

「I’m a being whom had lived around roughly one hundred years ago. 〈Flounder Crow〉is what they call me. An existence within a worn out hero.」

「A hero? of a previous hundred years ago?」

Merea couldn’t immediately understand the words of Flounder.

「Yes, it was a very old story of the past. I have already died a long time ago.

The ‘me’ now was a spirit residing in this Sacred Mountain, Lindholm to dispel my regrets, such a vague existence.」

「Isn’t this place the spirit world or something?」

「You’re wrong. The world you said was different from this one. Speaking about it from your soul, saying that this is a parallel world is more proper.」

「– A parallel world.」

(TN: Parallel world fits better for “Isekai”) Merea muttered taking a glance on his both hands.

「All of us called you here for the purpose of clearing away our regrets.」

Though Merea began to understand the words of Flounder due to his reasoning way of speaking. His head filled with surfacing questions did not became any clearer.

「Why? Why– me?」

All of those question was summarized into those words.

「It was due to you raising the otherworldly plant that you found. The person who will crossed the otherworldly plant was the one selected. — Well for us it was something like a legend though. However believing that, that purple vegetation growing here, and the other one blooming it’s flower to you, was due to its own choice.」

「That purple vegetation….」

Blooming a beautiful flower on the last moment, that vegetation.

That was a flower that came to meet my soul.

「That’s right. That purple vegetation connected this world and the world you resided in. I only guided you so that you wouldn’t lose your way.」

「Am I, really alive?」

「Alive indeed, different to the hundred spirits that resides here, you are surely alive. Compared to our souls who only wandered about, upon dying with regrets, your soul is brimming with life.」

「I should’ve died..」

「Only on the world you came from. Your『vessel』had only used up is life essence. However, it's not as if your soul has died.」

「Is that… how is it?」

「Indeed, it is so.」

Merea began to survey around his surroundings.

Doing so, as if not being able to hold itself any longer, another spirit has appeared on his sight and began speaking.

「Oi, don't be too sloppy and gloomy, you're alive you know? Hearing your conversations, you have experienced death on the vessel of the other world. Then you should be happy that you are alive! Having a body is amazing you know! After all you can embrace a woman!」

「Wait, you muscle-brain shut up for a bit. Merea is a pitiful you know? Because he just woke up so he still couldn't properly understand his situation.」

The spirit with a huge body was being told off by the female spirits with tall and slender figure.

「Understand? Let him put his feelings into place first. Though we just became like this upon our death, Merea upon dying just recently, has again entered a new body you know? Compared to us, it's complicated! So if you don't let him sort out his feelings yet, it's no good!」

「I – I know it already! There's no need to make such an unpleasant face. Sorry for rushing things Merea.」

The man obediently lowered his head, and the woman with a grin in her face waved her hand.

「Ah.. no it's fine..」

「First things first, Sit down Merea . Let me explain things to you properly.」

As Flounder said that, Merea began sitting on that place.

Resting his hands on the rugged rock, he tilted his back and began to look upwards in the sky.

— The clouds are close.

The color of the sky of that place was in no different to the sky he saw on the window of the hospital room.

Looking at that sky, for the first time feelings began surging into his new body.

—I have begun a new life again huh?

At least for Merea, he was happier than anything because of that.

Chapter 04 : Chapter 4: “The Hero and The Demon King.”

Chapter 4: *The Hero and The Demon Lord.*

Part 01:

The peak of Mt. Lindholm where the fleeting spirits resides, had a harsh environment.

The climate, air and even more so, it carries an unusual and heavy atmosphere that can be felt at times and giving exactly the atmosphere of a “holy mountain”.

In addition, there are also other things that makes you feel the harshness of it’s environment.

Sometimes, there are creatures unknown to Merea that moves about in the sky.

And those creatures yet again, as for whether it was a beast or a monster, reflexively thinking its appearance will likely be described with such expression, Merea’s heart began to prickle with anxiety.

That day, in the midst of those monsters was a being with an appearance that he felt like he had seen before.

——I feel like I’ve seen that appearance before.

There’s no doubt. — It’s a『Dragon』.

Mt. Lindholm whose altitude is specially high to the surrounding area have its peak piercing through the clouds every morning.

As a result, the clouds altitude seems lower.

And when it does, marking the clouds and looking above it, though you will be able to see seemingly numerous winged beasts flying above, in the mist of them you will also catch a glimpse of that dragon.

Upon seeing the figure of the dragon that he could only see in legends before,

Merea's heart reflexively began throbbing fast.

Facing the opposite side, up to the dragon itself, in the peak of the sacred mountain of Lindholm, where spirits numbering to a hundred resides, there was a seemingly mysterious existence of a boy mixed in front of them.

『*What the.. those group of dying great spirits have come up with something interesting again huh?*』

Uttering those words with a joyful tone, it began to descend on the summit.

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Flapping its huge wings, flying with its body moving still, lastly it began to land with gentle and light movements.

The body of the dragon was standing tall at the peak of the holy mountain.

Merea was instinctively overwhelmed by the powerful presence of the Dragon.

「*Uoh! It's really a dragon. A D-r-a-g-o-n*.*」

(TN: It was a katakana, Doragon)

「*To be precise, it was〈Heavenly Dragon〉. Because there are also 'earth dragons', you have to remember the difference.*」

「*Ah.. O-Okay.*」

It had only been one week since Merea reincarnated.

His daily life was surprisingly going well.

Firstly, for Merea to grow accustomed to the environment, a cave and frozen mysterious pickled meats were prepared and adding with consumption of other fruits, he managed to live somehow.

For his livelihood, it seems a fixed amount of food provisions was prepared by the heroic spirits beforehand.

For Merea, listening to the troublesome stories of the heroic spirits while shuddering in the cold winds of the mountain was really difficult.

That's why, at first the the spirits only told him about it in moderation, and as such he managed to lived by with it.

「So.. why is a boy living in such a dangerous place like this.」

The dragon said, tilting it's head.

The beautiful man from the spirits that brought Merea, Flounder Crow, with a warm smile in his face to walked towards the dragon and said-

「It's because he is our child.」

「Oh, the usual "child of heroic spirits" huh? To think it would really succeed. With that, these bunch of rashly strong heroic spirits that remained were able to obtain happiness huh.」

「Well, it's just a bunch of former heroes that failed when they're alive though.」

「… I guess, that's right.」

To the self-ridiculing smile of Flounder, the dragon muttered a small voice.

「But even so, what an odd appearance.」

The dragon then, turn its face towards Merea.

「A white hair seemingly like the snow, The color of the eyes was that of a fresh blood. Rather, if you were to ask me, he's just like a ghost.」

「His white hair was inherited from〈Lei Lace〉. And the red hair was inherited from mine. With that said, because it was combination of many essence of the spirits, it's probably indeed peculiar. However, having Lei Lace hair is quite beautiful in itself right?」

「Oh, indeed. If it's the hair of the that white heroine with peerless beauty, without a doubt it's beautiful.– Then, as for that Lei Lace?」

「She's already "gone" you know?」

「What?」

「Leilace upon watching over the birth of Merea, she already went gone. Because as for her regrets, it was not something like getting betrayed or killed but rather dying without giving birth to a child or so it seems.」

「I….. see.」

The dragon emitted a bit of a melancholic facial expression.

Though the face was that of a dragon, Merea was still able to tell.

「Well, though it's quite saddening, for you all, such happening is a blessing itself right?」

「That's right. Because after overcoming your regrets, you will surely become happy.」

While listening to the conversation of Flounder and the Dragon, Merea understood the existence of the spirits a little bit.

He was able to surmise the reason why Flounder and the others were called Heroes, from the words of the dragon itself.

Heroes.

Flounder called himself『An existence within a worn-out hero』, albeit in a self-ridiculing tone, but from the way the dragon called them as such, that ridiculing tone is nowhere to be found or so he thought.

The spirits residing in this place were formerly called heroes and those heroes having to remain in this place seems like the truth.

「Though you're called heroes, you all are unexpectedly lenient. For your greatest joy to be something like ceasing to exist.」

The Holy Mountain of Lindholm, even to this world was a unique place.

A place where the world allows those who should've been dead to fool around.

At the same time, because it's a place for regret-ridden spirits to "finish something", it was place that the living seldom visits.

-Well, Flounder themselves seems like normal though.

Merea knew after spending time with them for a week.

That they are not very different from the living.

No, because he still haven't met with any living being in this world, he cannot confirm as such, but at the very least as for the living in the world he formerly resided in, they are not any different from the living.

However according to the heroic spirits, there are also spirits that obtained a body seemingly belonging to those of the living on the lower level of the mountain.

(TN: Okay, that i'm not very sure)

–Because of their regrets

「*Anyhow, if that's the case, there are only 99 of you remaining.*」

「*Those will soon have to rely on Merea.*」

「*–Will he really become the savior of the heroic spirits.*」

「*I do not know. However, I think he will become a splendid hero.*」

「*That's the most common regrets for you all. Sacrificing yourselves for the sake of the world but not being able to remain a hero to the very end, an unfortunate existence. — However, remember this.『The world is moving.』The world will change. And before you realized, the future that you all wished for may no longer be possible to be obtained any longer.*」

「*Having the heavenly dragon who watches over the world say that, the persuasive power is pretty strong.*」

「*Right. …….Well however, I am also concerned on how you plan to raise Merea, That's why when the clouds became lower yet again, I will take a visit.*」

「*I'm counting on you. After all, it seems Merea won't be able to make friends currently.*」

–The parent declared tinged with loneliness.

「*Because there is probably no other benevolent living being that will come to the sacred mountain again after all*」

「*Un-Well then, fare well*」

「*Yes.*」

Saying that, the dragon once again flew back into the sky.

–Though the spirits are occasionally mysterious, this world is really seemingly fantasy-like.

Merea, knowing that the beings that once only belonged to people's fantasy came to being, his heart throbbed and was tinged with anxiety at the same time.

*Fantasy too stronk**
(TN: Jk~ it's Fantasy is overwhelming)

Supposing that those kinds of beings were to oppose him, will he still be able to live in this world properly?

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–I understood that I could live, if I did as if it was a matter of life and death.

Huh? This is not putting the cart before the horse! It feels as if, for one to live here, he must also know what death is like.

Another week has passed since the Heavenly Dragon took a visit.

That day, Merea has been running about in the peak of the holy mountain of Lindholm.

With that said, it was actually due to the『Fire balls』blazing and burning vigorously, chasing him.

「*Hey, try to escape even desperately, This is a special training for you since you got used to living here!*」

「*Just what is this for anyway!?*」

「*A training for the purpose of becoming a great hero, obviously!*」

–This is tyranny.

Listening to the stories of the great spirits, I've already known their reason for calling me here.

—Apparently, they want to make me become a hero.

A savior of a nation.
A hero to save the world.
A hero to help others.

There are various reasons, but basically a "hero" is basically a splendid title.
A title that the spirits residing her were once called.

However, due to some gruesome incidents, their various last moments were seemingly met with a tragic ending.

Being betrayed by their former comrades, being made to be a human sacrifice, being disposed of after being used.

Among those stories told, there are times that the word "Demon Lord" resurfaces.

In this world, it seems the word "Demon Lord" once held a very special meaning before.

A special meaning, though that was still a vague way of describing it, this was because the word "Demon Lord" had various meanings from different times or era.

There wasn't really a clear explanation about it.

However, if you connect the words of the spirits,

〈Demon Lord〉 was a『label』that is changing.

or so according to their words.

As for if the spirits themselves have bitter memories with the ones regarded as 〈Demon Lord〉, they didn't speak in detail.

Because of that, the probability of them being involved on the tragedies, felt quite lacking.

But even so, by intertwining the fragmented information from them, I was able to roughly guess the meaning of the word 〈Demon Lord〉.

It was an existence that is both『outrageously powerful』and a『personification of evil』.

——or it was probably close to that.

I was able to guess that much.

After checking the answers, I came to Flounder to inquire about it.

At that time, Flounder while smiling wryly,

『Probably pretty close or something.』

or so he answered.

After listening to the other spirits,

『You see, in the past…..』

『There was a time were I was addressed like that.』

And

『The meaning had already changed from the time that I was alive.』

and so fort, but there seems to be no fitting answer.

The meaning has changed?

Changed from what? And to what kind of meaning did it changed into?

After running around and asking other spirits, lastly I was able to find myself returning towards Flounder's place.

And so Flounder, with a reluctant expression,

『From being used to refer those outrageously powerful and personification of evil existences to just being used to refer to those outrageously powerful.』

—answered as such.

Was the personification of evil definition was removed from those called as "Demon Lord"?

Was it removed on its own, or was it removed intentionally by someone?

–Just what kind of existence is a demon Lord?

By the end of it, the hazy feelings regarding that was etched to the chest of Merea.

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「Even to this day, Is there still a reason for me to do this!?」

「Of course! Definitely! What are you going to do if your opponent is the demon lord? Demon lords often have a peculiar way of『Researching Power』to improve themselves you know? There are also those filled with talents at birth, there are also those who have techniques similar to secret ceremonies. In my age, that's how it is.」

But even so, I've been hearing nothing but those words from the mouth of the spirits, nowadays.

On the other hand, Merea using his own methods other than the spirits' has slowly began to gather information regarding the "Demon Lords"

「*The existence of that Demon lord is pretty much still vague to me though!!*」

「*Eh.. well, time will come for you to properly ask Flounder about that.*」

「*That way of shunning the subject is not fair!*」

Merea said as he evaded a blazing fire ball.

However immediately spun the next words.

「*—— The demon lords of the current age seems to be on the decline though~*」

That's an information regarding Demon Lords that he managed to secure with his own methods.

Though it's just a piece of information, it's an information that did not came from the spirits.

To the words of Merea that was as if baiting to obtain an information, the male spirit with a huge body who oversees the training of Merea, Tyrant, widened his eyes seemingly in surprise.

「*That story, where did you heard it from?*」

Immediately, Tyrant's facial expression suddenly changed into a consenting one.

「*—Oh, from Clautice huh?*」

It was the name of the Heavenly dragon who visited the summit of sacred mountain the other day.

The own method of Merea was in fact just merely asking the heavenly dragon rather than the spirits.

「*Certainly, that guy knows various things after all.*」

「I didn't hear anything other than that though – Oops!」

The fireball came towards Merea's foot.

Avoiding while strandling, Merea kept on it.

「So.. what about that?」

Though Tyrant remained silent for some time as if thinking about something.

「Even if they are indeed on a decline for the time being, a being similar to that will just come one way or another. Only the name changes.」

Words that felt strangely realistic have came out of Tyrant's mouth.

Before Merea even gets to ask the meaning behind his words, as if being pressed for an answer, Tyrant began to elaborate his words.

「How they call it doesn't matter. The problem is, if that kind of being will oppose you, for example, a moment where it will make a move against one of your comrades, having the capability to protect them yourself is better isn't it?」

「Well, that is also correct but…..」

The purpose of this training probably lies in those words.

A training for the purpose of being a hero that could save others.

「Then, do your best. Don't worry, your body have fine sets of muscle. With this even if you are thrown in various situations you will be able to bite on it just fine. I knew it, the resolve of those who died once are different, in regards to the desire to live.」

Tyrant, while speaking rapidly had successfully diverted the topic.

On the other hand, Merea realizing that the topic has diverted, after looking at his surroundings, with the fireballs making idle talks a waste of breather as it beginning to hasten it's speed floated, he reluctantly went along with the flow.

「I don't remember being given time to ascertain my resolve though!」

Merea never had regrets in his past life. He had lived with all his got in his own way.

Though his life was short lived, he already did what he must have done.

However, the latter half of his life up to his death, the sorrow of having his heavy body deprived of its freedom was carved on his mind.

That's why being able to live again with a body that can move freely was already enough for him to be grateful.

Even if someone were to be reincarnated after death, there's no guarantee that you will be given a body that could freely move after reincarnation.

And judging by the fact that his life before didn't have memories of his former life, there's no guarantee that his former memories will take over the body of his next life.

— The fact that I can remain "myself" on my next life, is probably only for this time.

Retaining my memories and knowledge, being able to cross worlds like this must have been just this once.

With those thoughts in mind, Merea, desperately lived up to the present.

The reason of being able experience reincarnating once, must have been due to one's prudence.

「*Alright, I'll be back in two hours.*」

「*In two hours!?*」

「*Its fine, its fine, haven't you gotten used to the current level. I will play board games with Flounder over there so try keeping up with the fireball until then. Bye then.*」

Saying so, the spirit with the huge body, Tyrant, fluttering while waving his hand, turned his heel afterwards.

As Tyrant headed towards Flounder whom had a beautiful smile on his face, Merea managed to steal a glance while running away.

Just looking.

And never stopping on his tracks.

——Even the beautiful smile on Flounder's face seemed quite sadistic.

And so Merea who've gotten tired of seeing such state.

「*Uwoh~! Dangerous! My hair is burnt!*」

—continued avoiding that fireball.

Chapter 05 : “Technique God’s Evil Eyes.”

Okay, from this day onward, I’m posting chapters as “post” rather than pages. Anyway as for Jutsu-Shiki (Technique) <術式>, and Maryoku(Mana) <魔力> do you want them to keep them as is or change them?

Anyway, there you have it.

Chapter 5: Technique God’s Evil Eye

Part 1:

One year has passed since Merea reincarnated.

For Merea, ever since the day of his reincarnation, he never had even a spare time to breathe. Nevertheless, he felt like he only managed to desperately survive the ‘Spartan training’ of the spirits.

「Erm, this technique can be done like this, while this technique requires various elements woven together, this… a-aah! Why are letters and symbols mixed together? Just who the heck came up with this!?」

That day Merea, while surrounded by three female spirits, was studying the complex patterns carved on a stone tablet. Tracing them with his very fingers, muttering complaints, and at times scratching his head.

On the other hand, the three beautiful female spirits watching Merea with grin in their faces said–

「Yes, this one’s different. This technique is no good—. If you do it like that, you won’t be able to emit flames.」

「Haa.. Really, just who the heck is it? The one who made this thing.」

「Who knows? Isn't it god? These techniques are similar to physical phenomena after all. Why living things came to being or why the speed of light is determined on a fixed value. If you question those kind of things, the answer you will eventually came up would be "That's just the way they are.」

「I know, I know that already! It's just the complexity of these things are too stupid that I couldn't help but inadvertently complain! 」

Merea was receiving lectures regarding『Magic』that day.

Specifically called as magic, they are phenomenon created by various〈Techniques〉and can be made possible to happen by utilizing『Mana』as a source.」

〈Techniques 〉are various methods or ways of making the magical phenomena occur.

Determining the world providence, sometimes by utilizing the power of the soul language, using such techniques to make it a reality.

(TN: This, I'm not very sure :　世界の摂理を計算し、ときには言霊の力を組み込み、そこに術素という燃料を投じ、現実に起こす。)

Though at times there exist some consistency in it, the arrangement of the letter and shapes for techniques in order to make such phenomena happen at will, , are a complete mess.

For starters, one must get used to the technique's language system in order for things to turn out their way.

Physical trainings are used to carve techniques into his body as a hero, this kind of training on the other hand is where you pound and burn out your head, and if you ask Merea, the latter is more tire some than the former.

「Though you've built up splendid muscles during the first year already, you have to put some more effort into it, though from our perspective, having a good muscular body is fairly splendid in itself already.」

「Then, where's my dinner? 」

「Eh? This and that is different. If you do not do it properly, even having a splendid muscular body won't earn you dinner, you know? 」

「Hmph, wearing such a happy smile in your faces…」

「Alright, then analyze this technique and learn the countermeasure techniques also. 」

「Ugh, my head hurts… do you really have to resort to such extreme measures? 」

「You have Flounder Crow's evil eyes after all, if you do not have the knowledge of techniques to make use of that properly, it will just become a useless possession.」

With that said to Merea, he glanced upon the water container placed above the stone tablet.

His own faces was reflected on the surface of the water

Pure white hair, and red eyes.

His red eyes that were seemingly inherited from Flounder

——〈Technique God Flounder Crow's Evil Eyes.〉

–or so it was called.

—— Indeed, thanks to these eyes, the composition of the techniques I have to learn was huge but…

〈Technique God's Evil Eye〉 can see through composition of technique.

Though in most techniques, it becomes impossible to see through within the phenomena when it already occurred, but with〈Technique God's Evil Eye〉it becomes possible to see through them even from the exterior.

And thereby, after being able to read through your opponent's technique and being able to counter it with the corresponding countermeasure techniques, it's possible to render the said technique invalid.

Though you can also win the battle by hitting your opponent's technique with a technique of an even higher fire power, in such cases, if you do not know the gist of the nature of your opponents' technique, you'll be hopeless.

It's exactly due to that, because the method of absorbing your opponent's technique, or deflecting your opponents' technique would be hard to do just by brute force alone.

There are also times that your opponent could use 'engraving technique' or the act of carving curse symbols into things to attach a limitation or restraints to living things.
There is also a corresponding countermeasure techniques to deal with such.
The way of countermeasure for that is to alter the composition of such techniques.

That's why the spirits were earnestly stuffing the theorem of techniques into the head of Merea.

「 The ideal way is the degree of deflection. The moment you read the technique of the opponent by using the〈Technique God's Evil Eye〉, you must immediately use the countermeasure technique to deflect it. If you can't event reach up to that level, you won't pass you know?」

「But deflecting is…」

「Do it without complaining.」

「Okay…」

Though the spirits are gentle except on their trainings already, be they woman or a man, when it comes to training they're excessive like Spartans.

◆◆◆

Part 2:

Merea, while utilizing〈Technique God – Flounder Crow's Evil Eyes〉have begun reading the technique used by various great spirits. Furthermore, in order to come up with a counter measure technique properly, firstly he must–

「Ng, gu guah…!」

「Alright, one minute. -oops.」

「Shut up!」

It took exactly a minute.

–Read them, understanding the technique by using the combination of characters and symbols and familiarizing the combinations by using their final composition.

This time, in order to properly reverse it, performing the countermeasure technique.

Not necessarily having to reverse the symbols but just having the characters reversed alone won't result to a successful countermeasure technique.

This is because the mirror opposite of the symbols has an entirely different effect compared to the relevant symbols.

That's why, Merea is stuffing various technique theories into his head.

From the well-known technique theories, even the theories of the secluded people living in the distant regions, similar to secret ceremonies.

From the various technique from the various spirits' birthplace, up to the techniques used by the heroic spirits themselves when they were alive, their various technique have different methods.

Upon applying the various theories stuffed in his head, coming up with various potential countermeasures for each technique, and finally using the one that seemed most effective.

The process is too long.

To be exact, at first coming up with a proper countermeasure technique usually takes a minute.

「In that minute, you would've died already.」

「I know..」

「Though at first, using a barrier countermeasure is good but, but in the distant future, an attack-type countermeasure will get you more fired up.」

「An attack type?」

「Not defending but countering the technique of your opponent and turning it against him is a more effective way in rendering it invalid. As for my black flame technique, the attack type countermeasure for it would probably be the white flame technique, so by altering the technique and deflecting it back, you will be able to shot first. It's the ultimate way of countering.」

「Being able to alter the spell and being able to shot first.」

「There's an opening before a technique converts mana into a magical phenomenon after all. Though the activation of the master practitioners are really fast, there is a guaranteed time to analyze it before that. Even if you don't use flounder's evil eyes, if you read ahead of the technique, you could come up with a proper countermeasure technique by reflex or so it seems. Well, even if you don't become that monstrous, if you are a superior practitioner, estimating the technique's intensity upon just by seeing it activate is a pretty common.」

「Just now, didn't you say monstrous? I'm being likened to monsters!! 」

「Don't worry, having〈Technique God's Evil Eyes〉,〈Iron Body of the War God〉and inheriting the characteristics of various heroic spirits, you've already became way past a proper human being a long time ago.」

「『Don't worry』my ass!* 」
(*TN: I edited that a bit to a more fitting rebuttal comparable to the original.)

「Did the vessel of the soul grew? I'm not really sure about those parts but, I

wonder if Technique God Flounder Crow, knows.」

Muttering that, the female spirit continued emitting relentless techniques by surprise attacks.

◆◆◆

Part 3:

And so, approximately three years has passed since training of the heroic spirit happened.
Seemingly in just the twinkle of the eye, Merea grew up.

「Then lastly, three at the same time.」

That day, in front of the three spirits, he began to put his arms that started to feel light on guard.
He was preparing for battle.

The woman facing him on the other hand, stretched their arms in front of them,

「Flaming Lance!」

「Thunderous Lance!」

「Water Lance!」

-and began to emit various spells.

The instantly casted technique begun to immediately form in their hands but, immediately after the flame, thunder and water spears began to take form, the composition of their spells is no more visible.

There is almost no delay or lag in the techniques emitted by the three women.

That itself is the proof of their excellence in their techniques.

However, to Merea's sight, the composition of the techniques can be seen as clear as day.

In that instant, Merea began to devise different kinds of formula in various ways.

Various symbols from the technique's language started to form from Merea's hands and then spread out resembling a battle formation, beginning to form a barrier seemingly like a shield.

Various spears began to strike the barrier technique that protected Merea.

And so–

「–Un, I'm giving you a passing mark. Well that's pretty acceptable.」

The barrier that the spears collided into, in that moment dissipated.

The counter measure he made, was a barrier that neutralizes spells that collides into it.

「Finally! It took three years!!!」

「It took ten years for me though. Compared to me, you are more talented. How strange, even though you came from a world without such techniques.」

Coming towards Merea, while scratching his head was Flounder who had an enthusiastic smile in his face.

The former owner of Merea's evil eyes.

Right after Merea inherited it upon being born, the「Technique God's Evil Eyes」ceased to exist from Flounder's spiritual body.

However, apart from being the former possessor, it was also Flounder who taught Merea how to use the evil eyes.

「If Flounder himself says that, it makes me happy. But it's also thanks to Flounder's guidance that I became like this right?」

「That's right, isn't it?」

「It was thanks to all of you that I was able to perform this much, is what I think.」

「If you say that much, those three would also surely feel glad.」

Saying that, Flounder began to point his fingers towards the three female spirits and being guided by it, Merea who glanced towards the three was suddenly at lost for words.

Those three female spirits, the appearance of their body is becoming thinner and seemingly about to disappear.

「Eh?」

Merea who inadvertently voiced stupefied sound, rushed towards the three female spirits.
The three female spirits facing him had a gentle smile in their faces.

「That's right. It seems our regrets have already ran out of fuel. I wonder why, I feel like I could grasp how Leilace felt on that time.」

「For Leilace, having properly given birth to a child is her greatest happiness though. Just how happy did that girl felt?」

「Leilace, died pretty young after all.」

(TN: You might have noticed but I changed Reyrat to Leilace because it seems more feminine. Is it fine?)

「E-Everyone..」

An anxious expression resurfaced on Merea's face.

However, the three spirits only caressed Merea's head consecutively.

「It means being at peace, it's the same for us. I thought I had a more complicated regret but it seems I became satisfied in just raising you up. Well it's probably because we also never had a child when we are alive. Really, motherhood is pretty troublesome.」

「Merea, at first we thought of making you a hero for the sake of exacting revenge to those bastards who betrayed us but now we don't want you to burden you with such things. Binding the freedom of a child to something like that won't be good for the heart after all.」

「That's just how it is, so live as you see fit, Merea. However, because you're a man, you must at least have the power to protect those important to you. 」

Three voices resounded and after that..

— The three spirits disappeared.

(TN: I crie everiteim)

Next to Merea, Flounder who was glancing towards the sky,

「With this, the holy mountain will become quite melancholic again.」

–softly muttered those words.

Chapter 06 :

I've been slacking off because lately I've been into villainess female MC novels such as Common Sense of Duke's Daughter and Destruction Flag Otome and other genres. (I've gotten quite fed up with these Isekai, Tensei, VRMMO novels lately as well.) But really I never knew reading female protagonist novels are a good change of pace, lmao.

Anyway, I've been sacrificing some sleep in order to read a lot and can't translate with that much fatigue in my brain, so it was quite late.

But anyway there you have it.

Chapter 06: Your future in two words : Demon Lord

Part: 01

When Merea turned 15 years old, half of the spirits had already disappeared.

Their regrets were purified as if inversely proportional to the growth of Merea.

More specifically, upon having Merea learn their specific abilities, as if due to having already performed their duty, the heroic spirits disappeared.

Merea felt saddened about it.

「Even though everyone summoned me to become a hero, they already disappeared before witnessing it happen. It feels as if I killed them..」

「That's wrong, Merea. Rather than that, you've granted them happiness you know? After all, the never ending chain of revenge they're carrying was finally cut off. To them whom had lived all their lives with regrets, being satisfied with something other than their regret is a really great thing.」

Flounder Crow had still remained on Lindholm.

It has been 15 years since Merea crossed the world together with Flounder.

It such a long time but it felt fleeting.

「What's your regret, Flounder?」

Merea couldn’t ask the spirits about each of their own regrets.

He would probably be told about it if he asked or so he thought, but he didn’t want them to ponder over the harsh memories they’ve experienced.

However, half of the surrounding heroic spirits have already disappeared and he didn’t know when Flounder might disappear himself so finally, Merea couldn’t control himself any longer.

「Me? My regret huh? Oh right, what was it again? I could only remember a few memories of the past though.」

Hearing those words, Merea’s heart began to jump.

Flounder himself doesn’t remember his regrets clearly.

He forgot about it.

This is something that exactly leads to the disappearance of the spirits.

That’s why Flounder himself might disappear before long.

–or so Merea realized.

「Don’t worry, because I will watch over Merea until the very end.」

「-un.」

(TN: Affirmation sound, I wanted to keep it that way since it sorta had a different vibe than yes.) Though Merea felt comforted by those words, he also felt saddened at the same time.

Part 02:

Merea’s body was firmly forged by the battle hardened heroic spirits.

However, Merea have yet to descend from the holy mountain.

At first he wanted to descend from the mountain to peek at the world’s situation a little bit and climb back, but thinking that upon moving back the spirits themselves may have already disappeared, and becoming anxious with such thoughts he couldn’t make himself to climb down.

And so, Merea never had a chance to measure the scale of his strength in

regards to the norm of this world.

After all, there's no proper human being that climbs up to the sacred mountain of Lindholm.

Those who dare to climb the mountain are rarely enough and upon climbing they will become possessed by the spirits on the lower level of the mountain and lose their minds, such humans will become something akin to a beast.

As for the spirits, they have no proper substance or body.

Though there are spirits in the holy mountain that could maintain a temporary body for a short time, however upon witnessing the growth of Merea, their regrets have grown weak and aren't able to do so any longer.

Part 03:

That day, the most battle-hardened heroic spirit, Tyrant who had a large body, was facing Merea on his last training.

Tyrant's body materialization could only last 2 minutes.

On the short time of exchange between offense and defense, Merea was able to beat down Tyrant.

The only first time where Merea got serious was during that time when he was able to beat down Tyrant.

「– You've gotten strong, Merea. You've gotten too strong to the point that it's quite vexing. Thanks to you, my body had become weak. — Damn it, what was my wish again? Thinking about it now, it might've been finding someone to succeed my techniques.」

Merea was able to exceed Tyrant.

Merea whom never won even once on their sparing have finally overcame Tyrant. That day, with a satisfied expression on his face, he was patting the head of Merea.

「〈War God Tyrant Leharl's Iron Body〉 was inherited from me. Your body is strong. Even using things such as dull sword should prove to be not a problem to you. You should be able to understand that by yourself. You who could move my body better than mine is without a doubt, strong. Carry the 〈War God〉 name

with pride. That would be enough of an offering to me.」

(TN: Okay, I'm not very sure on that one.)

「Tyrant….」

「Don't make such a face. My essence surely exists in your body. That's why, I will always be together with you.」

「– Un」

「Even if your soul is from a different world, you were able to clear away my regrets, I've become quite attached to you as my son. Therefore I will go. After all, I have stopped wanting to burden you with such strange obligations.」

Saying that, Tyrant body has grown even thinner.

His spiritual body is about to disappear.

But before that, he struck out a fist in his right hand.

Merea immediately approached him and struck his fist to Tyrant's fist.

「Be well.」

「Good bye, pops.」

(TN : Pops = Oyaji, or so I find it more suitable.)

「Haha, not bad, being called that name.」

And then another spirit has yet again ascended.

Part 04:
Taking heroic spirit's essences in consideration, Merea's body had a strange life force in it.

(TN: This are names so I'm letting you change it if you want, romaji below)

〈**War God Tyrant Leharl's Iron Body.**〉

(Tairanto Reharu)

〈**Lord of Life, Miusel Blue's Body of Revitalization**〉

(Muyuzeru Buru)

〈**Lord of Death – Ahath Cyrath's Heart**〉

(Ahato Sairasu)

〈God of Illness, Cyrile Sum's Anti-bodies.〉
(Shiriru Sumu)

There are still more various special abilities that it carried.

Those special abilities of the heroic spirits are all integrated to 〈Otherworldly Merea Mea's Spirit〉

Part 05:

As the heroic spirits decreased accordingly, Merea's free time increased as well.

'In the early days, everyone was competing who will come to Merea first but as those moments have decreased as well, the time allotted to the training of the spirits that have disappeared have turned into his free time.

Though the training was quite severe, because the heroic spirits' sharing of their knowledge in techniques and other information were also a once in a life time opportunity, those moments were also now treasured.

On the other hand, he didn't know what to do with his free time anymore.

He also learns the fundamental structure of the world from the heroic spirits, at times the heavenly dragon that descends down also tells him about current state of the world.

However, there was no time to witness it with his own eyes.

And because he hasn't seen it yet, the desire of wanting to do specific things have yet to resurface.

And as such, with his days of worries continuing, that day Merea found a mysterious stone on the corner of the holy mountain.

A stone that is rare even according to the stories of the heavenly dragon.

——〈Future Stone – Fiunace〉or so it was a stone called as such.

Holding on to that stone for 30 minutes, will tell you a possibility of your future with just a few characters.

「It's really is just plain fantasy.」

Even with that in mind, I could not help myself from trying it.

And so Merea decided to peek into his future using the future stone.

Part 06:

It has been 30 minutes since Merea held the〈Future Stone – Fiunace〉still in his hands.

And so, on the exterior of the stone, characters have started appearing one after another.

◆◆◆

『Demon Lord.』

◆◆◆

Merea then broke the stone by striking it with a hand chop.

——Phew.

With the sensation of cutting still in his hands, Merea began to survey his surroundings.

If the spirits saw him just now, they will surely gather around him.

——Even though the heroic spirits have brought me up to become a hero, really, this future stone sure is defective.

With a large and deep breath, his heartbeat has calmed down once more.

In the holy mountain that was seemingly filled with cold atmosphere and breeze, suddenly upon looking in its surroundings, he discovered other future stones and decided to test it once again.

——That one before must've been some kind of mistake.

As he embraced his wish and conviction, another 30 minutes have passed since he held another stone.

『Demo-』

Broke it again.

–How weird. It shouldn't have been like that.

What raised him was various heroic spirits numbering to a hundred.

Even though he was an existence similar to that of thoroughbred of heroes. That was odd.

–It would've been better if it's just a "normal person" but if it was the opposite, I'd be bothered.

–This is the last try. Just once more. There's such a thing like "Third-timer's luck" right?— though, there is also such thing as "What happens twice will happen thrice."

Merea's third attempt has begun.

『Devil』

— and was finished in that instant.

——Didn't it just got worse!?

It's much worse than a『Demon Lord』.

At the very least, I wanted to be a "Lord".

——I must never tell Flounder and the others about this.

And so Merea began to gather and hide the future stones that he stroke and split into two from the other spirits.

Future Stone Fiunace, is not something absolute.

In the end, it's nothing but just a『Future possibility』.

Given some more time and trying it again, surely things like『Savior』or『Great Hero』and such thing should resurface in it.『Brave』is also fine.

(TN: Kyuuseisha, Eiyuu and Yuusha)

–It's fine even if it's a lie, even if it's just merely by the appearance. Please do such.

Merea has wished.

Anyhow, if things turn for worse with the heroic spirits finding the stone and say something like「Look, it will surely say "Great Hero".」, in order to destroy it before the heroic spirits see the result, he must strike it with the speed of sound.

–That will surely be difficult.

I will try this again later on anyway so, smashing everything aside, I must hide them somewhere.

And so on that day, on the curriculum vitae on Merea's mind, the hobby section was filled with items like『Gathering Future Stones』.

Part 07:

One month has passed since then.

–It should've change by now. No, it has definitely changed.

Though there is a small hasty self-consciousness, feeling restless he could not stop himself any longer.

Wishing that the result such as『Demon Lord』and『Devil』from that Future Stone Fiunace has changed, he held onto the future stone that he hid yet again.

30 minutes have passed.

He let go of his grip.

— Oh, this time it's a drawing.

Resting his hand on a chair filled with seemingly thorny ornaments, it was an appearance of a guy smiling with a broad grin.

It was a chair seemingly like a throne.

In addition to that, it was the kind that belongs to a person with excessive preference on evil things.

Next to him were various person bowing their heads down.

——How strange.. This really seems like someone who is doing evil things.

I wonder who is this.. This guy who behaves exactly like that of a demon lord.

Hair as white as snow and red eyes. This awkward attempt to resurface an evil appearance.

–It definitely looks like me, this guy.

Must be my imagination.

However, assuming that this is indeed just my imagination, I want to say something to this guy in the picture.

You are not fit to be an actor.
Judging on how he made that expression alone, which is poorly done.

Merea struck the stone yet again.

He got used to doing such.

–Using a picture that would be hard to judge…..

However, still that appearance was not that of a『hero』.

Next. Let's proceed to the next one.

Please make it in characters next time.

Wishing like that, he held the stone yet again in his hands.

『Lord of Demon Lords.』

— Disappointing!! No, It's good, it's good, surely『Demon Lord』and『Savior』must've been mixed right? However since the word『Lord of Demon Lords』doesn't really fit, maybe it was supposed to be something like『King of Savior』or such.

Immediately after that, he chopped the stone into two pieces.

–You* aren't possibly the kind to say『Ah this is wrong, this one is wrong~』to yourself when you've made a mistake right?

(TN: *Omae – sorta disrespectful version of "You)

Because next time he tries it again, it will just result on『Demon Lord』and such once again, Merea stopped peeking into future with such.

—— If it's something like『Lord of Demon Lords』then the remaining of hope is very dim.

Yosh, Yosh, move forward, move forward.

He forcibly persuaded himself.

Merea on that moment.. (It’s eyes rather than ear though)

Hello? Hello!?
THIS IS THE EAR! BOSS! PLEASE OFFER A REPLY!
Inside his head
IT'S NO GOOD! HE'S DENYING THE SIGNAL!
IT MUST'VE BEEN SOME KIND OF MISTAKE
MAOU?

Chapter 07 :

My English vocabulary may not be as large as I thought. I'm having trouble choosing the right words or phrase sometimes but please bear with me.

But anyway, this is a feels train chapter.

All aboard!

Chapter 07: *"The demon pelt that they made."*

「Merea, you used〈Future Stone Fiunace〉didn't you?」

「-Ough!?」
(TN: Surprised sound)

It has been a year since the future stone resulted into『Lord of Demon Lords』. Even now, there are times where Merea collects future stones.

At times, holding the future stones he gathered, the results haven't changed nor improved for the better.

On the other hand, the population of the spirits have decreased to a single digit.

That day, Flounder was asking Merea while emanating a seemingly forced smile.

It seems Merea's actions were found out.

If that's the case, then they might have also found out his primary objective of hiding the stone in order to not let the spirits use them.

「I knew it. By the way, what's the result?」

「Erm….. G-Great hero?」

「Merea is not really good at lying right.」

「Yes…」

To be precise, he is bad at lying to the spirits whom were also his parents.

Though he could fool the children of the heavenly dragon that comes down to

play with unnatural nursery-tales made up with lies woven together, if the opponent is Flounder his tongue always falters.

「Let me guess. –『Demon Lord』was the result right?」

「Eh!? H-How did you know?」

「Haha, I managed to predict such a little bit. That prediction has been growing larger and larger within me, maybe it was due to the stories of〈Heavenly Dragon〉Clautice about this world recently.」

「What kind of story?」

「There's a rumor about『Demon Lord Hunting』going on in this world lately.」

「Demon lord hunting…」

「-Un. There's something fishy about it. It seems the city-states in this world had more thirst for power than I thought.」

Flounder said while suddenly straightening his posture. Merea imitating such, have straightened his posture a bit as well.

Flounder took a breath and as if readying himself, he began to emit a serious expression and started talking.

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「I've already told Merea about the description of『Demon Lord』changing from both outrageously powerful and personification of evil to just an outrageously powerful being, right?」

「Yes, a bit.」

It seems Flounder will now talk about the detailed stories regarding the Demon Lords.

「About those words, in the past, it was not well-known to the point of being wide spread. Something like『Merely Outrageously Powerful Being』seems too distinct right? 」

Flounder seemingly troubled, laughed.

「Around the time when I was still called a hero, a being that is both outrageously powerful and personification of evil was called a Demon Lord.

However, around the time that I died, the『Personification of Evil』portion was removed, and it became a word that represents a being that was really powerful. The era where I lived must have been the『turning point』leading to that change.」

Turning point.

As to how the transition happened into that meaning, of course Merea still didn't know.

To that Merea who was guessing the reason in his innermost thoughts, Flounder on the other hand just turned a question towards him.

「By the way, do you have any idea how did it changed that way?」

「Nhn…」

Merea had several ideas as for the reason. However not even one seems to fit. While still wondering about it, as if running out of time to guess, Flounder spoke before him.

「It's because the Demon Lords that are the personification of evil have drastically decreased. And before everyone realized, the threat they posed didn't exist any longer. The tyrannical ones that had that much of power and were smeared with evil were mostly slain.」

「Isn't that a good thing?」

「Un, on that part.」

Flounder's smile had changed into bitter one.

「But due to that the『Common Enemy』of the humans– rather of the nations have ceased to exist. Because they had common enemies before, the various nations didn't really pay any mind to the other nations neighboring them. Because the weapons they had were before facing the same opponent. However, when the demon lords perished, a dangerous atmosphere have enveloped the various nations.」

「Have a heart!」

「Even if you complain on history it won't change a thing. Anyhow, that resulted in this time, war has erupted between various nations.」

It was an awful story. Merea thought to be blunt.

「And so as the wars erupted between various nations, the meaning of the word〈Demon Lord〉has changed. It was changed by the convenience of the nations.」

「What do you mean?」

「Those nations have desired a strong power to use in wars.」

Well, in other words, for them to go to war and to win it, they desired a reasonable amount of power. They've probably set aside the various problems it will cause and solely focused on winning.

「While speaking of "great power", the word "demon lords" come out. However, the demon lords are now next to none. Their numbers where exhausted due to hunting.」

「un.」

「Because of that, the attention of the nations were turned to another target.」

「Another target?」

「Yes. — To those that existed before the numbers of the demon lords where exhausted, the beings that were similar to a medicine to them, they turned their attention towards the『Heroes』.」

Merea was starting to get dizzy. He was able to predict the path that the history undertook from the words of Flounder.

「The heroes whom faced the demon lords were strong. However, they were not evil. Rather, they were an existence of total opposite. When the demon lords diminished, those so called heroes have lost their duties. However some of those heroes have cheerfully returned to their livelihood due to their various desires. To endeavor into business, to improve their techniques, Passing the martial arts they mastered in order for it to prosper and open a dojo. To utilize their excessive abilities, going to adventure into the unknown. There were different kinds of heroes. Maybe due to their fight against the demon lords, they've decided to stay away from conflicts.」

Glancing in the sky with eyes filled with nostalgia, Flounder said such. But that

line of sight of Flounder slowly fell into the ground.

「However, those heroes were met with tragedies.」

Suddenly, in the midst of the conversation was a word filled with melancholy.

–Tragedy.

「In conclusion to that, those nations who've turned their attentions towards the heroes have fabricated them into being demon lords.」

「Oh….」

–I knew it would soon lead to that.

Merea couldn't stop himself from breaking into heavy sigh.

「At first they bowed their heads and pleaded saying『Please cooperate on war』to those heroes. Those heroes couldn't find a good reason to turn hostility into their rival nations in war. That's why, them who could not go against their honor, refused to participate in war. For them to go along with such selfishness, of course they refused. However, the nations desperately wished for those fascinating powers that they had. But they are heroes, they can't force them and naturally and they also couldn't forcefully take away their powers. And when all doors for them have closed, someone uttered–」

They should just do so using『labels』.

「And so finally, for them to forcefully take away the powers of the heroes, they fabricated a new『label』for them.」

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「They set up the heroes as an『evil incarnate』demon lords.」

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「Once it started, it can't be stopped any longer. Those half-hearted method had gone excessively well. The label demon lord have begun to attach itself to the other heroes. Afterwards, those heroes have become the demon lords of the next era.」

It was a really cruel story. The word demon lord, became something akin to a devil's pelt on that era. Merea remembered the words of Tyrant.

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『A being similar to that will just come one way or another. Only the name changes.』

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Their situation was worse compared to the words of Tyrant.

The meaning didn't change on his time.

In other words, the malice that the『Demon Lords』of the past era accumulated was burdened to those who carried it on the next era.

Rather, it became something like "Demon Lords were the main culprit" to everything.

Merea thought so in the same manner.

「As those have repeated, finally the effectiveness have grown numb. Fabricating the malice have become a bother to make and in the end, the distinction of the word 'demon lord' have changed into something synonymous to『Outrageously Powerful』.」

「I…. see.」

It was hard to nod.

However even if he refused to nod, it's not like the history will change.

「It seems even the standard for having the lenient label 'demon lord' have also gone lower. As the wars of the era have moved forward, accordingly, the reproduction was probably not effective. Hearing that from the words of the Heavenly Dragon Clautice, I manage to predict such a detestable future.」

In otherwords,

「Comparing Merea to such standard, upon descending to the society, you will surely be compared to a demon lord.」

Saying such, Flounder emitted a bitter smile. He was able to see various feelings residing on that bitter smile. Self-mockery, solitude and anger as well. In addition to being tinged with worries, it still had various feelings in it.

「If you descend from the mountain and display the powers of the heroic spirits

that dwell in you, the powers that you devoted himself into, consequently you might be labeled as a demon lord.」

So that was the case or so Merea was convinced.

And so, Merea felt that he finally realized, the reason behind the anger and the sadness that resides on the bitter smile of Flounder.

With the words『Power of the Heroic Spirits』, he realized.

Flounder thinks that those are his own fault.

Making him a hero was a wish with good intentions.

Even if he wasn't able to become a hero, he should have at least have the power to protect others, he was brought up with that in mind.

However, as those accumulated, Merea had become someone outrageously powerful.

Possibly, even exceeding the expectation of the heroic spirits.

Precisely succeeding, utilizing or possibly mastering the essences of the spirits, the soul that piled them up, Merea.

By becoming someone powerful, Merea will be branded by the label『Demon Lord』.

By the time he realized that, along with the self-depreciation within him, dread, sadness and anger towards the era was born within Flounder.

That's why various feelings can be felt within the bitter smile of Flounder as he told the story.

「It's tyranny.」

Merea realizing that, but not knowing on how to react to such, uttered those words in a light tone.

Though he want to relieve Flounder by saying that he didn't really mind it himself, even if he didn't mind, it might not be the same with Flounder.

Perhaps, no matter what he says in the exterior, it won't destroy the bitter smile that Flounder had.

Merea also understood as such.

Chapter 8

Flounder · Crow

Merea tried to change the topic in a hurry.
But rather than changing the topic unnaturally, and to anger Flounder, which most would not think of trying, somehow he wanted to naturally change the topic.
But,

「I've got to tell the truth, I also became a Demon Lord from a Hero. It's Somewhat embarrassing to say Hero when talking about my history, it's because the word is confusing enough to refrain from using it. It's hard to speak indifferently.」

In the end even Flounder wound up being betrayed.
Merea while feeling the unrewarding softness that ends up dulling his though, notices that Flounder is in the same state, such as wanting to talk about it to the end, and they decided to quietly get on this topic.

「Flounder is a Demon Lord… huh. Textually it's not a very good look.」

This androgynous good-looking man of delicate features is a Demon Lord.
It's quite a complicated matter because of the previous image, you would imagine a more rugged looking person to say it's a Demon Lord.
When Merea is suffering from a mismatch of reality and the image of a Demon Lord, Flounder is continuing to say tricky words.

「After I was betrayed I was deemed to replace the previous Demon Lord, being named as a different Demon Lord -… And being Killed was my former regret, such a thing became a regret because I wanted, if you want my honest opinion – There is no feeling of wanting you to take revenge.」

Flounder, as if he had decided that he will take the hate of the people, even though he did not deserve it, he went side by side with those words of hate.
Yet Merea didn't hear a word of regret from Flounder, he was thinking that.

「Then, what flounder remembered as a regret.」

「That regret I had has weathered. The other regret my heart has is that I'm sorry for what happened the others. –Everyone's feelings.」
「If you remember then it's good?」
「There is no such thing. At the same time, I regret that the regret had not weathered earlier. It's good that it happened. You are a pride that we had in our lifetime, we did not want you to dirty your hands. Before the regret had weathered, if my enemy had visited this Lindholm Holy Mountain, I would have gone out of hand.」

Although Merea thought that it does not appear to be that way, on the other hand, only a spirit body that was filled with regret could be seen in the Lindholm Spirit Mountain, so it could not be totally denied.
The spirits were full of rationality, but they were like that only until the time the last of them is swallowed by the [Heavenly Sea of Souls].

— But for vessels of regret, I wonder if I got too involved

They were aware to some extent of the signs of involvement.
However, if you borrow the previous words of Flounder, the first thing is that Merea was born as a vessel to dispel the spirits of regret, so they should speak indifferently.

「But-」

Suddenly , the thoughts of Merea about Flounder were cut abruptly.
The eyes of Flounder had the same red color as Merea's.
Two pairs of red eyes stared at each other.

「Instead, it sprouted a new regret.」
「What is it?」
「I'm worried that you will get killed by the world of today. That is what is keeping me here.」
「…」

They have stopped being pulled.
They have stopped being stuck in here.
Flounder unleashed such words, probably because he already has been called to the [Heavenly Sea of Souls] .
Merea Guessed that.

The roots of regret that had become a spirit body were ready to resolve at Lindholm sacred mountain, ready to be unleashed from wandering in the same place.
But, at the last-minute,

— What should I do to stop pulling back the release of Flounder.

What should I do.
How, will Flounder be relieved.

「- That's what I've heard from Heavenly Dragon Clautice, thus those who have been labeled as a Demon Lord in a loose way, seem to be showing signs of decline.」

Once Merea is no longer worried, Flounder continued talking.

「decline…」

Merea had heard the story from Clautice.
That the time had changed and the Demon lord were in decline, now he can clearly understand the meaning and the reason for such a story.

「Because much had to be done to become that way. That way by the time I died, in the same way that decreased the Demon Lord as an incarnation of corruption, I think I'm the one who took the longest and was the most hunted.」
「Isn't there a nation that does not follow the stereotypes of the power of the Demon Lord as a bad thing?」
「There isn't. Because they are looking even at the possibility of the blood of the Demon King. — And, there is a big problem in the order you do things. To determine the destination of the demon lord power, chasing them into a frenzy because their means of escape are closed off, you can not be in a defenseless state, even if you are the Demon Lord. 『Once you discard your power we will give up on our own.』 do you think that the suspicion and fear will go away? It's hard to discard your power.」

— Certainly, discarding your power in a state of being chased sound scary…

Maybe it would not be a positive thing to thow away the power.
That way the state where you are trapped in the forces of the enemy and don't know whats to come does not come. I think so.

Discard your weapons, to discard your power, Dissecting the body, it might come to such a thing.

「The Demon Lord, wondering what to do, I wonder if they fled around in desperation while hesitating.」
「The majority is like that – I guess so.」

Flounder shrugged, Merea then asked the question again.

「Demon Lords running away… . – I already don't know what a Demon Lord is anymore.」
「I have said. Not only them, but also you, have a potential to be chased in the same way as them.」
「Yeah.」

It comes as said, You're right.
Flounder's insight for the future is scary.
Flounder that was able to foresee that『Demon Lord』had been drawn of the [Future Stone Fiunace], But that was because he was betrayed in the same way such as them, because I know that.

「So, if you wait too long and that happens -」

The next moment, Flounder uncommonly broke the silence and put a hand on each shoulder of Merea in a momentum, such as to approach.
Then with force to the hand, Flounder attracted the shoulder and turned around the body of Merea to the front.
In this state, Flounder said.

「- You are to, please cooperate with the Demon Lords.」

If you see only textually, I would be surprised I'm sure the other spirits would be the same.
Cooperation with the Demon Lords.
In particular, in the past, The spirits not only know was the Demon Lord as the incarnation of corruption, Flounder may have thought I disapproved and
『You've got what you're saying』
But I was brought up in order to be a hero, but cooperating with the Demon Lords which is the worst enemy of the hero.
But,

「They are not really a personification of evil, they simply have been caught in the traps of the word『Demon Lord』, if someone was looking for help -」

If such a person is a Demon Lord.

「- I would be glad to lend a hand.」

of course,

「In the same way you try to help them, I'm also trying too, and in doing so they will also try to help me.」

But,

「On top of that, they have been out of hand, if I wanted to take his hand -」

At that time I –

◆◆◆

Decided to be a Hero for the Demon Lords

◆◆◆

And,

So you,

– If you make me happy.

「Once you become able to cooperate in doing that, I also am to be protected by them. To them that also wonder if their power is something to be called a Demon Lord. One to protect others, that's the person I wish to become.」

Surely, the worry of Flounder should have lightened a little.

「-Yup」

Flounder made a complex wry smile, but the happy color seemed to be reflected strongly in the until now bitter smile.
Flounder looked up to the sky, while intercepting the sunlight with his hand, he continued his words.

「I recalled their regrets at the monologue. You from here, in order to realize those words properly, I won't force you to do it. I'll say a few things out loud to organize my thoughts, it's okay if you want to hear it.」

Flounder floated the usual smile

「Understood」

I wasn't going to slip away, but Merea returned.(TLN: I really didn't understand this line: 席を外すつもりはなかったが、メレアはそう返した。)
There was a silence of a few seconds, But then flounder began speaking the small words.
Merea on his words, was just quietly listening.

「I was once killed by those who I thought were my friends. Comrades of the same country. After defeating the Demon Lord, they asked for my power once more. My power called [Technique God]. My special power, was something very useful in the era of war.」

[Technique God Flounder · Crow Evil Eyes].
It's a power to see thought the composition method of a technique in a moment.
If there is a solid understanding and an operation type ability , it would be nearly invincible.

「Techniques are always a threat. Like demon flesh that ends up penetrating a tyrant the more an intense a technique, the composition of a technique can be seen by the evil eyes. Making events in the formula to make strong attacks more easily that is otherwise out of this world, it was easy to contribute to a large-scale battle.」

Without making a cannon, the side that would shoot a cannon in a more conventional way, there is the right composition.

「Both on the strategy and tactics, who is powerful and easy to use. I had a specialized eye for techniques , they were eager to have me, as their『Tool』– But」

Flounder sighed, and continued from it.

「I refused, refused to become their tool. To them, I was told to come and destroy the nation without any of the techniques for which I found funny. For the peace of my homeland I trained. In order to repel the near Demon Lord at the time. –not at all to invade innocent countries.」

The eyes of Flounder were serious.
And Merea finally at that time noticed, first was to keep an eye on『A certain nation』and second he noticed that [Flounder · Crow] was the person.

Flounder was the Hero that was called for the first time as a Demon Lord.

At the same time, I know that Flounder refused the unreasonable request of his homeland to him because of his own pride,

– Really, I guess flounder really was a hero.

I was convinced of so.
In those days that Flounder was trying to rush in an era of war, it may have been a clumsy way of life.
Maybe it was wishful thinking.
If to continue being alive, Flounder went with the instructions of his homeland, maybe he would had become a hero of the nation.
But,

Flounder · Crow chose the straight road like an idiot

The road, was a way that Flounder · Crow believed to be the『Hero』

「Thus having refuse once — I was struck by a poison」

Flounder was laughing to his own demise

「This poison, it was a hateful one that gradually worked. To bother using a slow acting poison, it may be because they wanted time to deal with me and to offer me the antidote for a price. Anyway, rather poisonous when you notice. But I had been around because I still believed in my friends, but they were slow to notice the poison, quite slow, no — I was aware, I did not believe that they would betray me at that time and believed that it was me, I was very young and very naive.」

Still,

「And in the verge of having such a tragic last moment, I was not able to not have no regrets」

Wow.

Merea thought in a pure pride that was brought up in Flounder.

「And I regret that I was not able to convince them in the true sense of the term, but there is a regret that I did not care enough about the poison, my life was through with regrets.
— And the poison is around, because the time left is almost gone, it was to be carried out in a hurry that it should do in the end. If my eye is deprived by them, it can also be made to be a seed of war. And, it would not be a good feeling being done that. So, climbing while filled with poison in this Lindholm sacred mountain devoid of people, I put the eyes on the mountaintop. Because I was not one of those that had a sturdy body constitution, I want to compliment the me at that time even now.
Then after achieving that — I died」

It was a Fierce death
Merea felt pain run in his chest.

「Then I became a spirit, while continuing to defend my eyes and friends. Safely, my eye did not pass over to anyone. –Those eyes dwell in the body of Merea. For such reason Merea is like a son to me. So as for me I am delighted with having given the eyes to Merea」

the happy face of Flounder, was burned in the eyes of Merea

「A universal hero does not exist. — though there might not exist such a universal hero. But at least now, the era of heroes is much more diversified than it was in the past, being subdivided. somewhere there is a Hero of a certain country, but for other countries they are a Demon Lord. that kind of thing has happened in this era that is occurring.」

Hero – what a wonder.
It floated someday, such a simple question, what is a demon king, it had emerged in the mind of Merea too late.

「But still, In my eyes he was a hero for someone who would be great, I think so. It’s okay to not be a big hero. I want to protect someone, so even with being a small hero — 」

— I want to spread the word about you guys.

Who have raised me on their own, to you guys –

「- Merea, we do not need you to spread about us, You are enough of a reward for us.」

Flounder stopped himself until suddenly, he said such a thing towards Merea, who was in his line of sight.
Like in words, such is the best foresight that Merea knew, it wasn't the first, but he still was surprised, he weirdly had gotten slightly convinced there.
Maybe it is, and probably is related that life really is over at the end as a spirit, he had gotten satisfied at that thought.

「Severing or regrets, it's a gift bigger than anything that you could give to us. But you may have not noticed, the spirits that had wandered to here have been able to escape the spell of regret thanks to you. Your soul that is across worlds, if it was not shown to me the figure of us would have been one that is not able to grow up, stuck in here wandering during hundreds of years. there would be only pain trailing in here.」
「…」

The words did not leave Merea's mouth.

「So Merea now you have to find yourself, we spirits gave you the best battle Technique that we could, and also a way to protect something — We gave and we as spirits taught you. Now it's up to you whether to use it.」
「I…」

Merea was a case of reincarnation, one that had been leaning against the desires of the spirits.
There would also be no other way.
Without knowing the lower bounds of incarnating, and the old tale that speaks of spirits, values have been formed by social conditions spoken by the Heavenly Dragon coming occasionally.
By it succeeding to have a mind and personality, there is moral, which has been formed from the original incarnation, but it's only this much.
The Merea that was born from this world, there is no influence of the world.
If Merea had impressed to be alive, but the Lindholm sacred mountain did not have a dream for the world, even of such Merea.

「『It』is your problem. There is no need to hurry. For you there is a lot of time.

In order to find that something, your first priority is to survive. So I give you this mission so that you survive. Your mission is to not be crushed by the world –」

Flounder said so and showed a faint smile.
Finally, Merea and Flounder stopped talking.

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– Table of Content –

Chapter 9

The wind has ceased, the time has come.

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「It’s about time I go as well.」
「You did well enough to hang on until now, Flounder.」
「Haha, even I am surprised about this tenacity of mine. But it’s better that I leave soon before something even stronger keeps me here. — I hope Merea will wonder me by surviving.」
「It should all right if it’s Merea. Don’t worry in terms of strength. The question is whether there is a will to live in him. After you have disappeared, he will have to get over it or he will die in this world.」
「It’s Fine. Merea is serious about living here. He was dead once, I wonder if that made his will to live.」
「- You’re right.」
「One thing, do tell me.」
「What?」
「I wonder if, Heavenly Dragon Clautice, is friends with Merea.」
「Now, I can’t really answer that. It’s a secret between Merea and me.」
「Haha, That’s a good enough answer.」

At the peak of the Lindholm sacred mountain the wind was blowing because of the current season.
And the Heavenly Dragon had lowered its body to the corner of the Sacred Mountain and had a conversation with the spirit whose limbs had begun to disappear.

「Maybe things will go against the way you want them to be because you help them. However, there is still hope. — We were watching Merea. But, its unlikely that I’ll to be able to watch him anymore.」
「Then I just have to watch.」
「Watch, if Merea is in agony like I was, please help him.」
「I also like Merea. I can hear a lot of interesting things from another world from

Merea. Personality… well… It's one that I don't hate. –My feelings are directed in a good way, you'll have to see. You have become the person he will try to reach in his lifetime.」
「I will cherish that.」

The legs of Flounder were almost gone.

「-You're going.」
「You're right. It's the last time — I talk with someone」
「The other spirits are?」
「I think they passed on perhaps in a different location. There are no signs. That's the same to consider for everyone. It's embarrassing to have left everything to be done by Merea.」
「You guys are strangely stubborn.」
「It's because our hero has a strong will.」
「It's a strange irony.」

The arms of Flounder disappeared, only his face and body remained.
The usual smile was reflected in Flounder's face.
It was a gentle smile, one that seemed to have a bit of trouble, and reflected a bit of sadness somewhere, a strange smile.

「Please say to Merea that I said『I'm sorry to leave you behind.』.」
「I'll do just that.」
「『Thank you』had been written already. The moment Merea awakes he will see it, those words.」
「Really.」
「Oh, tell him after that about the『Demon Lord Hunt』, or not, I already explained it if you don't want to talk about it. But because it's a story that no matter how many times you hear it isn't enough, I think it's better to explain it」
「I know.」
「It's likely that Merea will be labeled as a Demon Lord. I wonder, is there a specialized technique in the hands of a Demon Lord in the stories you heard?」
「Oh. It's the same type of your evil eyes. Yours are still better because they are a superior technique, But it will be told to the Demon Lord that yours, [Technique God's Evil Eyes], are now gone. It is a force that can help a war, the other side will be vulnerable. It's that kind of story.」

「That's all I want you to do.」
「In order to get a stronger force, a strong person, a Demon Lord can be convenient. Because nations rashly use the power to crush those who oppose it, the characteristic that they're bad gets stronger. They will be crushed even if they're only different.」
「Really… Such a convenient word. It looks like everything but that has been hidden. There isn't a such a meaning to the word. If you know it, you can't say it.」
「Let's say that if what you want really happens. This is an era of factions. I do not remember if it was always like this, the factions were changed many times. But my memory was always like that. If you win you get away with everything. It's an era where power is placed on top and you can't complain that the leader is stupid if he is strong — or they can be foolish and create a sweet country.」
「A foolishly sweet country huh…」
「If I can say, an attitude that is not stuck by pride is a noble one.」
「–Yeah.」

At that moment Clautice and Flounder had the name of a certain country in mind.

「If the demon lords were to stop having to run away, I'm sure it would be because of that country.」
「If there is an escape. And, if that escape isn't immediately destroyed. If such a place is to be taken in the hands of the faction who wants power, they would certainly obtain the whereabouts of the Demon Lords.」
「Well, if such a country were to possibly obtain the whereabouts, make sure to tell Merea.」
「Do not say that. If you are thinking about the countries which I was the head of, it is not the kind of country it was when I left anymore. It's not even funny.」
「Haha, that's right.」

Flounder's form began to shake, his face and body had begun to turn into particles in the air like a fog, and his words became distorted.

「When Merea is labelled as a Demon Lord, When such a time of trouble arrives — Tell him to survive in the east of the continent and aim to enter [Remius Kingdom], I'll leave for you to tell him that there is the core form of

『Sweetness』. If it's you doing so, I'm sure it will help Merea.」

Clautice checked that the name of the country that Flounder said was the same that of the one on his mind, and nodded for him to be at peace of mind.

「That's… the hometown of Lei Lace.」
「… Yeah.」
「- Did he ask?」
「What?」
「What has become of that kingdom right now.」
「-Yeah. It's the same as it was with me, I also had predicted that Merea would ask that. Clautice remembered the Remius Kingdom the same way I did, that place is likely to have the thing Merea wants.」
「Indeed. They went in to a good direction after I left.」
「And, where the hometown of Lei Lace was, now, is the country that the Remius King reigns. I told him just what he most likely needed to know. It's a strange thing to have half-hearted regrets remaining.」
「–Really.」
「Not that I should be interfering with the current era. After all — I'll leave that to those that are currently living.」

Suddenly, Flounder's face that was fluctuating looked up to the sky.
Clautice soon did the same

「Even so, Lei Lace has gone ahead. For the wife to go first, but I will soon follow.」

Flounder's face wasn't visible, but Flounder certainly shot a smile towards the sky.

「Because Lei Lace did not have a calm personality despite her appearance.」
「Fufu, yeah.」

Clautice also, was looking towards the sky, and shot a smile which couldn't be held in.

「–」

Silence
The wind died down.

– It feels like the world had stopped.
That is — when partings had to be done.

「I'll soon go to where she is.」
「… oh.」

The eyes of Heavenly Dragon Clautice had a tinge of sadness.

「Then at last. I will go to the [Heavenly Sea of Souls]」
「Oh. — Soul trapped in regret, now is the time to unlock the spell that has kept you here. — Farewell, spirits of the past.」

That day, in a place that Merea was unaware, the spirits who were at the Lindholm sacred mountain had ascended in to the sky and cut off their regrets.

Merea would know that they were gone after a few hours.

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Merea was dazed in the stone hut that stood on the sacred mountain, the voice of the Heavenly Dragon echoed to the inside of the stone hut.
When he went out of the hut, Merea heard about Flounder from Heavenly Dragon Clautice.

「-」

He was speechless.
However, a smile floated in the face of Merea, one that was very similar to the strange smile of Flounder's.
To Heavenly Dragon Clautice, the face of Merea which floated the smile seemed to overlap with Flounder's.

「… I knew. The time I was with Flounder amount to barely ten years. The long time I spent growing up with them. … I… because of everyone… had realized that… –」

One tear fell from Merea's eyes, then drop from drop they began to fall like an overflowing torrent.

「– I'll make everyone's graves now. After that I'll begin my descent to the lower part of the mountain.」
「A tomb.」

「Because everyone was a spirit of the past. They were probably forgotten. But as the proof that they indeed lived as proud heroes, I want to stand on that world. They were betrayed, they failed too, still, I want for them to become heroes, they were the hero for me who wanted salvation.I think they're amazing.」
「-Yeah, that's right.」
「So, to prove that they were indeed a hero, I will leave here a mark. Their feelings that never weathered.」
「you will go down to the lower part of the mountain, to do what?」
「I'll go find it.」
「Now the world is in enveloped in the dark colors of war. There is no such thing as universal values. Therefore, the universal hero that we originally looked at in Flounder, no longer exists. 」
「I know. Flounder also said so. So I think that I would be the hero for the things that I want to protect. It was their fundamental spirit. So now is a hero for Flounder. They wanted it to live in me. A hero to fulfill their hope, I will be standing here.」
「– I see. If it's like that I'll keep praying that you become a hero for the living.」
「Yeah, thank you Clautice.」
「While I was saying I also put a bit of irony -」
「The irony of Clautice would be to have good thoughts for me?」
「Haha, As always you are quite a bit cute huh. … Oh well there is too much to like about you. — I even have a bit of affection after this long. That's it. — Well, the clouds have been rising. I suppose it's time I go.」
「Yup.」

The sky as they looked up from the peak of the sacred mountain, was as if the clouds were calling.

「-Then bye.」
「Yeah, see you later.」
「Yeah.」

Heavenly Dragon Clautice disappeared into the sky.
Merea was the only person remaining at the peak of Lindholm Sacred Mountain.

That day [Merea · Mea] – was finally alone.

Final:【The Spirits and the Demon Lord】

Start:【The 22 Demon Lords】

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Chapter 10

Grief of the Sword Empress.

One woman who had climbed the Lindholm sacred mountain that day, stood wearing tired eyes.

「That's a dangerously steep mountain.」

The woman murmured in a low voice while looking up at the peak of the sacred mountain.

「And to be sent to my death because I was a descendant of a Demon Lord, quite the tyranny. And the last line drawn, was that when the Demon Sword of the clan was passed to me they weren't even able to hide their greed.」

The woman was of a family that had been referred as a descendant of a Demon Lord.

「But– I was driven out. Forced to climb the sacred mountain which has spirits all over, but they probably haven't noticed.」

When there is an opportunity, I want to put the holy sword at the legendary mountain's peak.
If there is one thing able to save the world, that kind of dream-like holy sword.

「– It's silly, I'm with only my Demon Sword in hand, one that is focused on killing, a Life-Eating Demon Sword…」

The image that she had failed to practice enough came floating to her mind. She was cornered, and was forced to do what they wanted.

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They had been poor in the term of mercenaries per city-state.
A country at the east of Lindholm sacred mountain.
In the current world, which had been died in the strong color of war, the mercenaries are in demand.
And also her body, which they wanted it to fight.

Her family's honor is on her, she has been passed one of the Demon Lord

『Series』.
The number of Demon Lords called [Sword Emperor] had diminished, they were either forgotten by the people or were finished.
But that Demon Sword became the reason why it still exists in the world.

[Demon Sword Krisher]

Once , her ancestor asked for a sword that could frequently kill, as a result of spending many of the ancestors lives, the Demon Sword was born.
Thus wielding a Demon Sword, the clan formerly boasted a strong armed force and was said to be a brave mercenary group called [The 38 heavenly sword brigade].
Thirty-eight people, thirty-eight swords.
A heavenly ceremonial sword was given to them, that's why they had such a name.

However, such a great mercenary group ended up being called Demon Lords.
As a Demon Lord with an『Emperor Series』, her family was allowed a new start.

— If it was as a mercenary that fights their enemy.

Because.
Once hired, they could become an allied force, but they could become a big enemy on another battle.
Mercenaries lend forces to those who paid money.
Mercenaries do that kind of work.
There are some who will ridicule them for battling all the time.
But in the era of war, from a nation that does not have its own army, mercenaries that provide their strength for gold are a welcome presence.
Therefore, mercenaries must be honest with their work.
So, having open relationships was not something that helped.
However,

— Those who first hired them, now appeared as an enemy calling them traitors.

The ancestor of that time, which boasted a superior strength, had been called Demon Lords.
Right now on this era, although the term of Demon Lord had been affixed to

someone for a variety of specific reasons, in the case of her ancestors it was a crucial reason.

It shouldn't be unexpected for them to hold a grudge.

Those feelings can be understood, but the label of Demon Lord that has been affixed in that era, also affect this era.
In fact, at first I tried to live a decent life away from the sword.
But, the Demon Sword came back again, and again to my hands.
If that would be because I had the blood of the creator of the Demon Sword flowing through my body.
And then, as if I was engaged in an argument with the Demon Sword, in another place the blood of the mercenary family was boiling.

As if it had been decided in advance, it was a forced invitation to fight.

— Well, Even I, eventually, ended up in their hands.

I tried serving and cooking, such as a maid, I did a variety of things, but not even one worked.
Their interest wasn't in that.
So when the dazzling gold of the mercenary industry presented itself, they sent myself to battle.
Now that the wait for the battle was over they were vibrant.
Gold went into their hands, but they no longer stayed away from battles.
They would drown in the heat of battle.

This should not remain like this.
So I thought.
While I was not apart from the Demon Sword.
I would be better off dead, with the Demon Sword through my throat, and by the time I began to think such exaggerated thoughts, I had already been wrapped by the sight of battle as a mercenary with the Demon Sword.

But, there is a turning point.

Those who supported the Demon Sword were chased out.
They were chased out, they ran away.
They will dig up the blood of the [Sword Emperor] that is lodged in this body of mine, because I was always swinging my sword. –and to die as a Demon Lord,

and.

— What's a Demon Lord.

There can be reasoning if the other party has been defeated by mercenaries. But I do it alone, I was asked to help them with the Demon Sword as an ally.

— I hate this war.

Drowning myself in battle like a mercenary.
At least for someone who wants to swing the sword.

They would not make it a heroic action.
They also knew.
The aim to be a『Hero』for those who have no military power, like a former ancestor — was no longer there.

— I am now a Demon Lord

In short, a label that does not peel off, had been attached to my back.
When I realized that my impulse is the same as my former ancestors, I was already being chased as a Demon Lord.

I was chased, I ran away, my head was in a mess.
I no longer knew what to do.
I wish there were guidelines to live a good life.
Because to die, after all– I still was scared.

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「A little more till the mountain's peak.」

There were many bodies of beasts along the way, and there were many of those who got of their bodies to form a spirit body.
The Demon Sword that specializes in single-mindedly killing, it seems that even spirits, can be killed by it.
Although the spirits that you hear rumours about may not be truly sliced, those that fall into the rank of weak and animal spirits, those spirits were dissipated in one swing.
I thought it was a bad thing, but surely that was the way it was supposed to be if they were to attack you.

Then the woman reached the peak of the Lindholm sacred mountain.

A man was there.

Harboring a beautiful snow-white hair, he was a man whose appearance transcended the living.

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The man burned a large stone with a mysterious white flame, he was knowledgeably modeling something.
It was clumsily elongated and had a rectangular shape, it had characters carved in the surface.

— A name?

This time, he pierces the ground with it, setting it up like a grave.

「…」

The woman while observing the man who was at the mountain's peak, took the first step.
Gravel, the sound it made as if calling, but the man did not turn around.

— Some kind of doll. Or some kind of ghost.

「I'm sorry. Because my hands are a little tied up now, if there is something you want me for, please wait for a bit.」

The man said that without turning around.
The breath of the woman retracts, as if not believing his voice.
It's as if the voice is healing, was leaked in surprise.

「Those are… for people?」
「That's right.」
「They are?」
「Tomb for the people who raised me.」

With such a simple exchange, the woman grasped that the man is a human.
Building the tomb for someone.
It would be a human.
There was such a confidence in the woman.

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Oddly enough, the work of the man was followed through day and night.
Because it does not end even though it has been going on forever.
I wonder what on earth made him do graves for several people.

The woman pierced the ground with the Demon Sword and was watching the man with her robe shaking in the wind.
The man is intently burning of the stone with the white flame in his index finger.

「How many graves are you planning to make?」

The woman who could no longer endure asked the man.

「A hundred.」
「Hu~n-hundred huh…」

Something like such a feminine voice is not like me.
Such a number had surprised me.

「…」

The woman was looking at the back of the man.
Then finally,

「If you want — I'll help you. What I mean is that since I climbed the Lindholm sacred mountain I might as well do this, It's not like I want to do it.」

So I said.
Half-lie, Half-truth.

「Really? I'm happy. So please do help me. The stones over there give them to me in order.」

But when I heard the happy voice of the man, it was all.

「All right.」

The woman took off her robe, it was wrapped around the hilt of the Demon Sword several times.
The Demon Sword was kept as it was, pierced on the ground.
Because inside the robe were thin clothes, the mountain wind would feel chilly, but it will warm immediately if one were to move.

「– Ah.」
「Hmm?」

Then suddenly the man stopped his movements, and moved his line of sight towards the woman.
The man had a red pupil which had a mysterious glowing light.

「I'm Merea. [Merea · Mea]」
「I'm [Elma · Elisa]. Our ages are probably the same, so you can call me Elma without the honorifics.」
「Then call me Merea. — Well, best regards, Elma.」

He did not ask me anything except for my name.
When I would ask if there was a deep meaning, because there was nothing I knew I would break the strange space needed without thinking, until the tombstone were completed I decided to diligently work silently.

— Trapped in those circumstances, but in this way it's not bad to have something innocent.

It might have been escapism.
But, Elma thought so genuinely.
This strange situation, she had began to look forward to it a bit.

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Chapter 11

Sorrow of the Devil

A girl with a body that seemed it would break if touched, had begun climbing the Lindholm sacred mountain that day.

「… I wonder if… I can climb it.」

She already had climbed much of it, but there was still anxiety inside the chest of the girl.
Her own Demon Eyes had confirmed that the most gentle climbing route was from the north side.
[Evil Eyes of the Devil]
It had an ability that was kind of like a far sight, but because the perspective is limited to above, it was called so.
They said it's the eyes of the『demon living in heaven』.

And because of that, my family has been labeled as Demon Lords.

The far sight would forecast that which does not wish to be seen of the people. They were afraid of it.
And they were the ones, that have begged for and wanted our clan to lend theirs power.
They at first welcomed lending the power of far sight, but later they realized the threat that was lurking.

In particular, the fear that you've got once you have contact with someone.

The Evil Eyes are something bad.
And again when to have a relationship with a person or not, is something very dangerous.

— Me, I have nothing …

I had the [Evil Eyes of the Devil] since my birth.
The Demon Lord lineage attached the issue of the [Devil]. — A blood lineage.
Even thought it is at the lowest ranking of the [Devil Series] but, nevertheless, it still is a subject of fear.

It did not have strength except for the [Evil Eyes of the Devil], it's probably one of the reasons why that could not become a [King Series] or a [Emperor Series].

— Mom, Dad.

A month ago, My parents were killed.
They were getting out of the way before someone from two generation before used the [Evil Eyes of the Devil], living such as to as much as possible not have contact with the people of the [Devil] clan.

And yet, they've been chasing.

Once they came to borrow a convenient power, but once you temporarily take distance once, they turn into enemies.
If it's that scary, then I wish to ask to never have lent strength from the beginning.
I wish I had no contact.
Again, allow me to do it again.
Even if I think so, It's too late.

The girl also had been chased by them.

At the cost of her father and mother, and into her ear the vague desire had been whispered to『Somehow Survive』– And she ran away.
While using the [Evil Eyes of the Devil] she only cared about finding a place where the pursuers would not find her, no matter where it was.
I welcome the Evil Eyes to myself, I don't fight against the power.
I wonder if I should really run forever.

Before the me that has escaped in a half-dazed state, there was the Lindholm sacred mountain.
Here the spirits who still have regrets gather.
Maybe I might have ancestors here.
There might be, and father and mother might have too.
It's not like the only choice is to run away, It's better yet to go looking for them in the sacred mountain, the girl was determined to climb the mountain.

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I have found along the way some spirits and mountain beasts, but I have

managed to not be found thanks to the Evil Eyes.
I can't afford to go back after coming all the way up here.
Cold wind has been hitting against my body, the ground surface mixed with the occasional snow came to be entangled with my legs.
The cold air had been hitting against the cheeks so much it had gone numb, I climbed up the mountain innocently.

Then finally, I arrived at the mountain's peak.

And there were a young man who had a beautiful snow-white hair and bright red eyes and a beautiful woman with black hair.

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— Why… would someone be here

Those youths have appearances that are like from another world, or better yet, that seemed like they were ghosts.
But the woman had an animated appearance.
A little wet with sweat, one could feel the charm in her black hair.
having good skin, it was a moderately trained body.
The fine body that would make you say it has no fat.
The woman is tall, she appears to be much taller than myself, there is also her back that is extended like a pin.
She is smaller than the young man next to her as expected, but she was taller than a woman normally was, so you can feel her strength.

— What should I do.

I wonder if I should say something.
When I worried, a voice came from the other side.
While feeding the curiosity to look towards the young man, I had began spinning words.

「You also lost someone?」
「Oh, hmm… Well…」

I'm no good at talking with someone.
Because of the Demon Eyes, I have lived away from people.

「Because I am separated does not mean I will attempt to do something, you

do not have to strain yourself. — rather, because it's pretty much the first time I talk with people of the lower bound, I'm tense.」

I wonder if that is tense.
I can see something like a leeway, but could it be that is his original atmosphere.
The way he speaks, though wearing a somewhat loose air, it feels like an approachable person.
In contrast to the transcendental appearance, I received a somewhat friendly impression from the young man.

「Is… that so?」
「Yeah. It looks like you made her put her guard up. Hey now, it may seem that we didn't because we are concentrated in this grave making, but I just met this person.」
「Fufu, Something interesting, right」

I wonder why I though that way, but it's the subtleties of your own mind, a clear answer is not found.
But, it's certain that the vigilance in my heart has melted when I saw him shrug his shoulders in an exaggerated manner.
The beautiful woman pointing at the gravestones on the ground cheerfully floated a soft smile.
It seems I have somehow got myself into a strange place.

— …I did not meet mom and dad.

I met with two mysterious people instead.
The peak of the Lindholm sacred mountain makes me have the impression that the outside world influence does not reach here.
Thanks to that, not being only chased, a room in a bit of my heart was born.

「Me too, the… grave? — for making it, can I help out or not… ?」
「Of course. I appreciate it. So, yeah… so that the graves pierce the ground and not fall, help us by finding small stones to fix the base in place.」
「Yeah, I understand.」

This young man talked too much that I felt I was not speaking with the same person.
There is a sense of intimacy felt.

「Oh, I'm Merea.」

Suddenly, the young man said the name as if he just remembered.
The young man, however, did not ask my name.
He quickly cuts his gaze, and『It's because we didn't want you to say it if you didn't want to say it.』came to show a behavior that includes care about the person in question.

「Oh, hey!」
「Hmm?」
「A, Aizu. My name … is [Aizu]」

I did not have the courage to expose my family name.
This long-awaited encounter may be broken up with the issue of the [Devil] clan.
But, I wanted them to know my name.
Because the ties of knowing each others names — I wanted that.

「I see. Well, best regards, Aizu.」
「Y, yeah!」

The girl dropped off the baggage at the appropriate location, and rolls up the long sleeve of her clothes.
Then, close to the grave of stone standing about had already been tens, she was going to fix the base of the graves with pebbles.

— I wonder whose graves it is.

although the name had already been carved, none of it has a space.
It's isn't the same family name too.
I wondered, but because it was likely to break this space, rather than to ask, I was decided to work in silence.

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